

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD

July 9, 1985

MEMBERS PRESENT: Norm Dooley
Stewart Harrod
Jouett Sheeting
Charlotte Stagner (4)

MEMBER ABSENT: Paul Cable (1)

There being a quorum, the meeting was called to order by Chairman Sheeting.

The first item of business was approval of the minutes of the meeting of June 11, 1985. Mr. Dooley made a motion that the minutes be approved as submitted. Mrs. Stagner seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The first item of business was a request from Mr. Monroe Doneghy for approval for the construction of a second floor addition to the rear of property located at 317 East Third Street. Mr. Randy Shipp, City Main Street Manager, gave the staff report on this request. Mr. Shipp stated that the existing structure is two stories tall with a one story wing across the rear elevation. The main body of the house has a simple gable roof while the wing is covered with a shed type roof. The applicant proposes to remove the shed roof from the wing and add a second floor to it. Mr. Shipp added that the addition would be the same width and depth of the wing and would have two windows on the south elevation. These windows would be 36" x 55" double-hung sash types. The existing structure is covered with 4" weatherboarding. Mr. Shipp stated that the addition would be covered with 4" aluminum siding. He stated a new shed type roof would be constructed. Mr. Shipp stated that the subject property is a turn-of-the-century residential structure that is located in the South Frankfort Historic District. Mr. Shipp stated that the new siding would be horizontal and there would not be any molding separating the new from the existing siding. Following further discussion, Mr. Dooley made a motion that a Certificate of Appropriateness be issued and the request be approved. Mrs. Stagner seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The next item of business was a request from Mr. Clifford J. Todd for approval for the construction of a roof and the installation of windows at 412 Wapping Street (Todd-Lindsey House). Mr. Shipp gave the staff report on this item and stated that the applicant wishes to begin Phase I in the restoration of the Todd House. He stated this phase will enable the applicant to secure the building against both the weather and vandals. Mr. Shipp added that as it now stands, the Todd House is a burned out shell with the roof missing and most of the windows broken out.

Mr. Shipp stated that the first part of the request is for the construction of a new roof. Mr. Shipp added that looking at a plan of the building, it is divided into the main body, which fronts along Wapping Street, and two off-set wings to the rear. The roof of the main body will consist of a truncated hipped roof that will have a small gable constructed over the Palladian window on the front facade. A hipped roof will be constructed on each of the rear wings. The original cornice design will be duplicated throughout.

Mr. Shipp stated that the second part of the request is for the installation of new windows and doors. Due to the fire damage, very few windows and the front door are all that remain in place. Mr. Shipp stated that the applicant will use historic photographs as a guide to duplicate the new windows in design and number of

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panes. Mr. Shipp stated that the applicant feels the damaged front doors can be repaired and retained. Mr. Shipp stated that the subject property is a two and one-half story brick building that dates from c. 1870 and was constructed in the Italian Villa architectural style. A fire destroyed all but the brick walls in November of 1978.

Mr. Shipp stated that due to the extensive damage caused by the fire, very little original material from the roof and windows remain. Mr. Shipp stated that whatever remained may be damaged beyond reuse but would be used as a pattern. He added that the roof and windows would duplicate the originals in size and shape. He stated the replacements may be of the exact materials, but the materials used would be compatible with the buildings integrity. He stated that two-over-two sash windows would be installed in those openings which originally held two-over-two sash windows. No new ornamentation will be added. The new roof will duplicate the original as will the cornice line. Once constructed, the roof will be covered with composition shingles. The materials to be used will be compatible with the structure. No artificial siding elements will be used and no uncharacteristic elements will be added. No major masonry work is proposed at this time, however, the planned repairs will necessitate some repair work. This will primarily involve the brick courses at the top of the exposed walls and around some of the windows. Due to extensive weathering, these areas are showing some deterioration. The applicant intends to use appropriate materials and masonry. Following further discussion, Mrs. Stagner made a motion to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness and approve the request as submitted. Mr. Harrod seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The next item of business was a request from the Frankfort Publishing Company for approval of the demolition of the structure at 324 W. Main to allow the construction of a parking lot. Mr. Shipp gave the staff report on this item. Mr. Sam McNamara, representing Al Dix, owner of the Frankfort Publishing Company, amended the request and stated he did not want to put in a parking lot. It would not hold very many parking spaces and was not feasible. Mr. McNamara stated that at this time the request was only for demolition of the building.

Mr. Shipp stated that the subject property is a two and one-half story brick structure that dates from the turn-of-the-century and is located on the eastern edge of the Corner-In-Celebrities Historic District. This building forms part of the streetscape of the 300 block of West Main Street. Mr. Shipp stated that under Section 17.083 of the Zoning Regulations there are four factors that the Board must weigh in arriving at its decision on a demolition request. Mr. Shipp stated that each of these factors was examined by the staff and the applicant as follows:

"Section 17.083 A: The importance of the building to the history and character of the district is to be considered.

Applicant: The applicant does not feel that the subject property is significant to the district nor is it architecturally significant.

Staff: The overall design is transitional in that ornamentation is very simplified, however, it does pick up such classical elements as a pedimented gable roof and a Palladian window within the pediment. Approximately fifteen years ago, a concrete block addition was made to the rear of the building, but was never utilized. The primary significance of this building is that it helps to unify the streetscape of the 300 block of West Main.

Section 17.083 B: The physical condition of the building is to be considered.

Applicant: The applicant feels that the property has been allowed to deteriorate over the past fifteen years to such a state that its renovation would not be feasible.

Staff: While deterioration has obviously taken place during the past fifteen years, no documentation has been submitted that shows the building to be structurally unsound.

Section 17.083 C: The cost of renovation of the building is to be considered.

Applicant: The applicant feels that the cost of renovating the original portion of the building would be so great as to be prohibitive. In addition, since the rear addition was never completed, weathering and lack of use have accelerated the deterioration. It is felt that it would cost less to demolish the building and build a new one than to renovate.

Staff: Once again, no documentation has been submitted to reflect even an approximate cost of renovation. Without such documentation, the staff can neither agree nor disagree with the applicant's contention.

Section 17.083 D: The existing and/or potential usefulness of the building, including potential economic return from the building, is to be considered.

Applicant: The applicant feels that due to its present condition, there is no usefulness for the building. In addition, " . . . the only possible potential usefulness would be as an office building.

Staff: It is agreed that in its present condition, the building is untenable. While it is true that professional offices are one potential use for the property, it is by no means the only use. In addition to offices, the following uses are permitted by right under Section 4.402: multifamily dwellings, single family dwellings, townhouses, two family dwellings, churches, libraries and museums. Section 4.403 provides the following conditional uses that would require Board of Zoning Adjustments approval: day care centers; home occupations; parks and playgrounds; private clubs; schools; antique shops; apparel and fabric shops; flower, gift and jewelry shops; specialty shops; restaurants; funeral homes; as well as parking lots; parking structures."

Mr. Al Dix, owner of the Frankfort Publishing Company, was present and stated that the Methodist Church owning the land he rents for the State Journal, wants the back third of their building back. He stated that he needs a structure to house his entire distribution center. Mr. Dix stated he had hired the Austin Company, experts in newspaper design of structures, and they stated the best alternative would be to tear down the building and start over. Mr. Dix stated that Mr. Jim Morris gave an estimate of \$175,000.00 as a minimum cost to repair the building. Mr. John Gray was present and questioned Mr. Morris' expertise in the line of giving repair estimates. Mr. Dix stated that Mr. Morris had renovated two buildings in the area. Mr. Gray stated that the applicant has not shown any alternative to demolition. Mr. Gray urged the Board not to issue a demolition permit at this time. Mr. Gray suggested that the applicant tear down the back part of the building and renovate the front part. Mr. Gray added that tearing down this building could create a gap in the continuity of the streetscape. Mr. Dix stated that he would use a facade similar to what is there. Mr. Sheeting reminded Mr. Dix that the Board would have to approve new construction.

Mr. Shipp stated that he had a letter from South Central Bell stating they had no objection to the demolition request. Mr. Shipp also had a letter from the Heritage Council stating they were in opposition. Following further discussion, Mr. Dooley made a motion to grant approval of the demolition request. Mr. Harrod seconded the motion. Those voting in favor of the motion were: Mr. Dooley, Mr. Harrod and Mrs. Sheeting. Voting against the motion was Mrs. Stagner. The motion carried by a vote of 3-1.

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The next item of business was a request from the Whitaker Trust for approval for the replacement of damaged stone elements and the removal of two metal structures on top of the State National Bank building at 130 W. Main Street. Mr. Shipp gave the staff report on this item. Mr. Shipp identified two work areas on this project. The first being the removal of two pre-engineered metal structures that were added to the roof of the building on either side of what was once the ballroom. Once the additions are removed, the flat room will be repaired. Mr. Shipp added that the removal of these additions would expose several hidden architectural features (i.e. windows, cornice, etc.). The second work area involves the repair and replacement of several damaged stone details (39 spindles and a few stone panels.) Mr. Shipp stated that these elements would be replaced with like materials.

Mr. Shipp stated that this request followed the guidelines set forth by the Architectural Review Board. Mr. Sheetinger questioned what would be done with the urns. Representatives of the bank stated that they intended to repair and keep them. They stated they wanted to try and take everything back to the original. Following further discussion, Mr. Dooley made a motion to approve the request and issue a Certificate of Appropriateness. Mr. Harrod seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The next item of business was a request from the State National Bank for approval for the demolition of the old railroad freight building adjacent to 106 W. Main to allow the construction of a parking lot. Mr. Shipp gave the staff report on this item. He stated that the applicant wishes to demolish the existing structure that stands at the end of Olive Street. The building is now a storage building. The demolition is being requested to allow for the development of additional parking for the State National Bank. Mr. Shipp went over Section 17.083 of the Zoning District Regulations and gave the requirement, the applicant's views and the Planning Staff's views as follows:

Section 17.083 A: The importance of the building to the history and character of the district is to be considered.

Applicant: The applicant feels that the subject property is not significant to the downtown district. It is felt that its removal will enhance the district by opening a better view of the rear of the depot.

Staff: The subject property appears to meet the age criteria for special designation, however, it does not possess any outstanding architectural detailing. Its design is strictly utilitarian. No evidence has been found to associate this building with a significant event or person.

Section 17.083 B: The physical condition of the building is to be considered.

Applicant: The building is deteriorated, but could be renovated. This, however, is not what the applicant seeks.

Staff: No documentation, other than a short statement from the applicant, was submitted to demonstrate the extent of the deterioration.

Section 17.083 C: The cost of renovation of the building is to be considered.

Applicant: The applicant feels that while the building could be renovated, its physical condition and the configuration would not make its reuse feasible.

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Staff: Once again, no documentation has been submitted to reflect even an approximate cost of renovation. Without such documentation, the staff can neither agree or disagree with the applicants contention.

Section 17.083 D: The existing and/or potential usefulness of the building, including potential economic return from the building, is to be considered.

Applicant: The physical configuration of the building would not allow for the development of marketable space.

Staff: According to Section 4.04, there are many uses available for the structure. The layout of the building will limit some of these uses. Due to the presence of loading docks and oversized freight doors, extensive modifications would be required.

Mr. Shipp stated that he wanted to prevent unnecessary demolition, but he did not want to prohibit safety or cause undue hardship to the developer. He added that he did not feel the demolition would adversely affect the area. He stated that the Heritage Council sent a letter stating they had no objection. Following further discussion, Mr. Dooley made a motion that the request be approved. Mrs. Stagner seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The next item of business was a request from the State National Bank for approval for the demolition of the structure at 106 W. Main Street (Commonwealth Building) to allow the construction of a parking lot. Mr. Shipp gave the staff report on this item. He went over the guidelines pertaining to this request. He stated that Section 4.245 of the Zoning Regulations state that off street parking should be discouraged as open lots fronting along major retail streets, such as West Main, St. Clair Street and the 200 & 300 blocks of Broadway. Mr. Shipp added that the intent of this regulation is to preserve the streetscape of the Central Business District. Mr. Shipp stated that by no allowing the development of surface parking lots along the street, the end result will be unified block of buildings, not a scattering of individual structures separated by ground level, paved lots. Mr. Shipp stated this continuity is important to the overall appearance of the Central Business District.

Mr. Shipp stated that there are four factors that the Board must weigh in arriving at a decision on any demolition. Mr. Shipp went over the section statement, the applicant's comments and the staff's comments as follows:

Section 17.083 A: The importance of the building to the history and character of the building is to be considered.

Applicant: The applicant states that there is no historic data available for the building, but does acknowledge that it is within the Frankfort Commercial Historic District.

Staff: The Sanborn Insurance map of Frankfort for 1925 shows that the Commonwealth Building is significant to the Central Business District. It is an example of the transition in commercial structures from the ornate Victorian era to the more severe modernistic styling. The facade shows a lack of the ornamentation generally associated with Victorian commercial buildings. There is no ornamental cornice and crest at the roof line and the windows on the second floor are grouped in pairs with no ornamentation. The building does, however, possess some very rich ornamentation.

The storefront area is surrounded by a band of highly ornate terra cotta work that is reminiscent of Sullivanesque detailing. This detailing makes use of stylized floral motifs. In addition to this, two inverted pyramidal panels are located adjacent to the second floor windows.

These panels are also highly ornamental. Between the second floor windows and the top of the parapet wall is a simplified cornice line. This is the only example of this type of ornamentation found in the Central Business District.

In addition to its architectural significance, the Commonwealth Building is important to the streetscape of the 100 block of West Main Street. While it is true there is already a surface parking lot adjacent to it, the demolition of this building would only widen the space between the remaining buildings.

Section 17.083 B: The physical condition of the building is to be considered.

Applicant: The applicant states that the exterior of the building appears to be in good condition, however, the interior has deteriorated. All mechanical systems would require upgrading to meet existing codes.

Staff: The building appears to be suffering from lack of routine maintenance, however, no evidence has been presented to show that the building is structurally unstable. As for the condition of the mechanical systems, this is not uncommon in older structures, especially those that have not received routine maintenance.

Section 17.083 C: The cost or renovation of the building is to be considered.

Applicant: The applicant feels that the cost of renovation would not be worthwhile to the property owners.

Staff: Once again, no estimate of the renovation cost has been submitted for review. It does appear that the amount of structural work necessary to put the building back into a useful state would be minimal.

Section 17.083 D: The existing and/or potential usefulness of the building, including the potential economic return from the building, is to be considered.

Applicant: The applicant agrees that there is probably some adaptive use for the property, the owners are not interested in pursuing this. Not only would such a use necessitate the owners to expend additional funds, it would create an additional parking demand. The applicant feels that there is little or no demand for the building as commercial space or business offices.

Staff: The two uses mentioned by the applicant are permitted in the Central Business District, but are by no means limited to these two uses. Section 4.04 shows the variety of uses permitted. One use apparently not considered by the applicant is the development of quality apartment units. This has been successfully done in other areas of the downtown. This is only one of the uses available.

Mr. Shipp added that parking is relevant to any development, but in the Central Business District, parking does not have to be provided on the same site as the use. Mr. Shipp stated that the detailing and design are unique on this building and worth preserving. Mr. Shipp added that he had a letter from the Heritage Council in opposition to the request. Mr. Shipp also stated that he had received a phone call from Flo Gormley, owner of 306 High, in opposition.

Mr. Rodney Ratliff, previous owner of the building at 106 W. Main, stated that the front of the building is not original to the structure. Mr. Shipp stated that the 1925 Sanborn maps shows that the building existed as it does now in 1925. Mr. David Carter, an architect on this project, stated that the parking lot is needed because the owners of the bank intend to renovate the bank and rent out space in the bank building. Mr. Carter added that with the demolition of the building, 92 parking spaces can be obtained.

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Mr. Carter added that the building would require much work to meet Kentucky Building Code requirement to renovate the building. Mr. Glen Harney, a contractor with 30 years experience, estimated that to minimally bring the building up to code for office use or multifamily use it would cost at least \$200,000 and \$750,000 to renovate the building in a first class rehabilitation job. Mr. John Noel, President of the State National Bank, stated that the parking lot would be a first class job.

Mr. John Gray, President of Historic Frankfort, stated that he thought the applicant should show economic return documentation. Dr. Rush, owner of the property next to 106 West Main, stated he felt the best use for 106 W. Main would be tear down the building and use the area for a parking lot.

Mr. Keith Logsdon, Director of the Planning Department, stated that a grant might be available to assist in renovating this building. Following further discussion, Mr. Sheeting made the following recommendation: "We would like a cost analysis on paper. The last one that we are not comfortable with is Item D. The existing and/or potential usefulness of the building including potential economic return from the building is to be considered. Now granted, it has been considered and we're all aware of this, but what we're recommending and I believe that you'll find this a fair recommendation. This project is not one that needs to be done immediately. It is not of a nature that it is all important that it be taken down for safety reasons or for safety hazards that exist. So our recommendation is this - that we postpone the decision on this proposal until our next meeting and that during that time we require a cost analysis by the State National Bank relative to the feasibility, based on financial investment and return of the Morris Arcade and we also request a meeting be conducted with the State National Bank, Mr. Keith Logsdon, Mr. Randy Shipp to explore possibilities of aid and/or the obligations and benefit of such aid. Now we're not making a decision but in order to satisfy the Board and the City and to be fair to the community, we would like a cost analysis on paper indicating to us the feasibility of the renovation of that building for any or every purpose you can think of the cost analysis of that building." Mrs. Stagner made a motion that Mr. Sheeting's recommendation be the motion for this request. Mr. Harrod seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

There being no further business to discuss, Mr. Dooley made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Harrod seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.


Chairman